



## DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

WMAC (NS) Quarterly Meeting  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
September 24-26, 2013

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**Lindsay Staples** (Chair) · **Rob Florkiewicz** Yukon Government (Member) · **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Chris Hunter** Government of Canada (Member) · **Mike Suitor** Yukon Government (Alternate) · **Jennifer Smith** (Secretariat) · **Christine Cleghorn** (Secretariat) · **Stephanie Muckenheim** (Guest), Yukon Government, IFA Implementation and Projects Coordinator

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September 24, 2013

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:15am and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **A. Review and Approval of Agenda**

The Chair reviewed the agenda and schedule of events for the meeting and suggested removing the muskox plan from the agenda and holding a teleconference to discuss it.

**Action Item 09-13-01: Lindsay and Rob to make final revisions to the muskox plan and involve Mike Suitor.**

**Action Item 09-13-02: Secretariat to organize a teleconference to discuss the muskox plan.**

Rob said that he would provide an update on the grizzly bear project as Ramona is likely unavailable.

Chris indicated that as Parks Canada has not seen the Polar bear tag MOU, the Council's discussion may be curtailed.

#### *Motion 09-13-01*

To accept the agenda as revised.

*Moved by: Ernest Pokiak*

*Seconded by: Chris Hunter*  
*Motion carried.*

## **A. Review and Approval of Minutes**

The Council reviewed the June meeting minutes.

Danny inquired about the use of rubber bullets in the ISR. He said that two summers ago a grizzly bear was killed by an ENR officer using rubber bullets. Rubber bullets were banned in Point Barrow and he suggested that they should be banned in this region as well. Chris said that with the right training rubber bullets can be an effective tool, but he understands the concerns. The Chair suggested that we could have a more fulsome discussion on this at our next meeting.

### **Action Item 09-13-03: Prepare information on rubber bullets and add to the December meeting agenda.**

Members had the following changes to suggest:

- *Page 3- Re rubber bullets, Chris said change to “the issue of rubber bullets could be raised in the context ...in the implementation of the proposed wild animals regulations...”*
- *Page 5- Spelling Correspondence- later as opposed to latter.*
- *Page 6- Item D, Sara Neilson*
- *Page 7 D- AHTC, meet should be met.*
- *Page 9- Item C- Firth River Management Guidelines. Chris to revise and send us comments on this section. Firth needs a capital.*
- *Remove Steph from the heading on June 12<sup>th</sup>.*
- *Page 12- PC update, third paragraph- remove Loney Creek reference. Last sentence- he was working with Aklavik*
- *Page 13- 4<sup>th</sup> one from the bottom, payloads- 600lbs less, the plane weighted more and now the payload is 600lbs less.*
- *Page 14- rewrite section of exam... “in the vein of..”*
- *Page 16- second paragraph, non invasive (not evasive), hair snagging, not hair snaring.*
- *Page 21- in regards to TK and industry. Ernest said that in TK when this was happening, Tuk was assured that the HTC would retain ownership of data. The Chair said that this is typically the commitment, but the TK doesn't always come back to the HTC. EP – said that it is valuable information and it would be expensive to recreate.*

### *Motion 09-13-02*

To approve the June 2013 minutes as revised.

*Moved by: Ernest Pokiak*

*Seconded by: Chris Hunter*

*Motion carried.*

#### **A. Review of Action Items**

The secretariat reviewed the following action items:

**03-12-08** Staff in office wanted to include the IFA-funded research proposal process in the Research Guide. To be included in the call for proposals.

**07-12-07** NS Grizzly Bear Study - Rob reported that he is in receipt the draft copy of the report, but the form of the report is not yet useful to inform community harvest management. use.

**12-12-04** Draft proceedings from the North Slope Conference are ready for printing.

**03-13-10** Lindsay suggested other possible information sources for past WMAC views on the visitor fees for Herschel Park. Stephanie noted that there is a draft of the cruise ship policy now, and a working group working on fees. Council will have opportunity to review in future.

**03-13-11** Staff continue to investigate health benefits options.

**03-13-14** Secretariat staff/Chair will follow up with the EISC regarding screening exemption for research projects. Outstanding. A joint letter was written by both WMACs to John Ondrak but haven't received a response as of yet. We are therefore operating with the perspective that we outlined in the letter.

**30-13-20** Jen will write up main points from collaring workshop and will establish links on the WMACNS website. Mike Sutor to check to see if he has a version of the minutes.

**06-13-01** Website review. Outstanding. Secretariat will send out a reminder in a few weeks.

**06-13-03** The Council will develop an educational package and module on the collaring issue and workshop. See 30-13-20.

**06-13-04** The Council will discuss the development of education material about North Slope birds at the December meeting. The Council discussed the possibility of a research proposal being submitted on this initiative for the December meeting.

#### **B. Correspondence**

The Council deferred correspondence review to an upcoming teleconference.

#### **C. Financial Report**

**The Council reviewed their financial position.**

\*\*\*1:20pm Dan Lindsay joined the meeting\*\*\*

\*\*\* Diane Wilson joined the meeting\*\*\*

#### **D. Parks Canada Update -*Diane Wilson***

Diane said that she is pleased to come at least once per year to our meetings and provide a larger Parks Canada perspective. Attending our meetings also helps her support Chris Hunter in his work. She provided the Council with an update (in meeting packages) that she reviewed orally.

The Western Arctic region continues to be understaffed. Many of the positions in communities are vacant. These staffing challenges arise in part from the disruption to recruiting caused by the 2012 changes to Parks budget. Recruiting challenges are further complicated by the fact that the pay scale in the territorial government is higher for equivalent positions. Diane is working closely with the IRC and other agencies to recruit Inuvialuit into staff positions. At the present time, Diane is looking for three managers. The Inuvik office is hovering just below 50% staffed.

Ernest asked if the turn over was due to lack of technical skills for the job, advertising strategies, and if equivalencies are considered by Parks Canada? Diane responded that for almost every position they have equivalencies. There are only two positions that require a university degree. Parks is working with the College to train people and also looking at bringing people in at lower levels and training them on the job to move them up. She is looking at Co-op and mentoring programs.

Parks Canada is putting a great deal of effort into communicating the stories of the Western Arctic with the rest of Canada. They staffed the visitor center this year to see if it helped to spread information about Ivvavik. They offered the youth camps this summer and had elders and cooks out, though there was snow this summer in the park.

The Western Arctic Field Unit trained a student to speak at the Vancouver Aquarium and Science World to speak about the western Arctic.

This year there were five Parks Canada-sponsored visitor-promotion camping trips to Ivvavik and one to Tuk Tuk Nogait. Four trips went, and one was cancelled due to weather.

Overall, Ivvavik had 46 visitors. There was one commercial trip on the Firth this year and no private trips.

Parks is presently reviewing the season to assess the visitor promotion trips to determine what worked and what needs improvement.

Wastewater treatment system for Sheep Creek has gone out for tender and it should be installed next summer. Engineers visited Sheep Creek this summer to look at the airstrip to assess what improvements, if any, are feasible. It looks like 30-40m might be

technically possible to extend the strip. Ernest said he still has a concern with safety, but he thinks that the 30-40 m would help.

*Break*

Dan Lindsey provided the Council with a summary of Yukon's activities heading into the fall. The Peel Watershed Plan continues to dominate Yukon's agenda. Overall, the government's focus continues to be driven by a strong interest in the economy. Environment's budget remains stable, with no increases or significant decreases. He noted that the implementation money associated with the IFA is a strong component of that land claim. Yukon supports increased, or at least stable, funding for the Council and research work on the North Slope.

The Chair asked about the process associated with the Richardson Sheep plan. Dan responded that it seems like we are at a decision point with the plan, and reviewing the actions associated with the plan and reflecting on whether they are not implementable and realistic. The Gwitch'in have said they would like to see a report on that status, the YFWMB sent a letter that Dan will forward to us. The letter comments on possible future directions.

The Chair advised Dan that the WMAC(NS) is under pressure to get a report out on the North Slope Grizzly Bear project. The Council is now in the position of needing to write to Aklavik and delay a workshop that had been planned for the fall. He further noted that the Council has a draft report on the Polar Bear Traditional Knowledge project, and that the Council is pleased with this project to date. Dan indicated that this is great timing, as the report will be useful in polar bear management planning. Dan indicated that he does not envision a separate jurisdictional management plan for Yukon for Southern Beaufort polar bears.

Mike Sutor then provided a project update for Yukon Government:

\*\*\*Dan Lindsay left the meeting\*\*\*

North Richardson Mountains Late Winter Moose Survey- a survey in the 1980s indicated few moose, concentrated in river valleys. They were surveyed again in 2000. Mike noted that an increase of willow cover since the 1980s has meant that habitat available to moose has grown. Most of the moose increases were concentrated in the Big Bell River drainage. Few moose were counted on the North Slope in March. Summary of moose surveyed:

1989: total moose surveyed =266

2000: total moose surveyed = 445

2013: total moose surveyed = 678

During the survey he also saw 48 wolves, 52 muskox, 24 Dall Sheep, and others such as a grizzly bear, 5 moose kill sites, red foxes, lynx, and only one wolverine, although there were abundant tracks. This population is doing well in terms of growth.

#### Porcupine Caribou Herd Rut Composition Count

This work was completed October 12-21, 2012. The entire herd was within 40kms of Arctic Village, but as the survey launched, the caribou started to move. They aged and sexed more than 11,000 caribou between the Alaskans and YG. The calf: cow ratio was 32:100. The survey experience included a rapid, long migration by the herd, that involved the bulls tiring and falling to the back of the herd. This would account for more bulls being seen in the west, and more cows in the east. Unforeseen problems with the USFWS plane meant that telemetry support was minimized, which was unfortunate. For 2013, Mike is trying to get more internal telemetry, and has put more collars on bulls. He will try to ensure that the survey is completed in a single discrete period, preferably early in the rut. He continues to have an excellent relationship with USFWS. His intention is to do these every few years, since it is a primary input into the model.

#### Survey – Habitat Use

USFWS found 85% pregnant females from their survey this year. Mike deployed 16 iridium collars this year, to transition some of the existing Telemetry collars. This coming year he would like to deploy another 17 or 18 if possible. Mike showed the Council Porcupine Caribou Satellite locations over the course of the year. He showed animals arriving on the North Slope relative to the normal peak calving date (May 29). Peak calving date was approximately June 4. The collars allow scientists to track movement, but not distribution. He wanted to figure out relative abundance and densities. After flying these transects, he reviewed this with the telemetry data and was pleased to see the data line up closely.

Mike was hoping to also understand long-term shift, and how caribou transition through different habitats through time. What other information might also be available to understand these long-term shifts? Lindsay noted that industry did a number of studies in the 1970s that may inform this query. Danny noted that on May 4, 1967 Porcupine Caribou calved at Cache Creek.

#### Fuel Cache

Mike had money this year to establish a fuel cache at Komakuk. He was successful establishing this, with the cooperation of Ivavik NP personnel.

**Action 09-13-03: Mike to present Richardson Survey work to Aklavik HTC in December.**

\*\*\*Break for the Day\*\*\*\*\*

September 25, 2013

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**Lindsay Staples** (Chair) · **Rob Florkiewicz** Yukon Government (Member) **Chris Hunter** Government of Canada (Member) · **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council · **Mike Sutor** Yukon Government (Alternate) · **Jennifer Smith** (Secretariat) · **Christine Cleghorn** (Secretariat) · **Stephanie Muckenheim** (Guest) Yukon Government, IFA Implementation and Projects Coordinator · Wendy Nixon, Government of Canada (Alternate)  
Guests: **Jim Hawkings CWS** · **Blake Bartzen CWS** · **Dan Teillet CWS**, · **Richard Gordon, Herschel Park Head Ranger**

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The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:08am.

Blake Bartzen, CWS, reviewed Management options for the Western Arctic Lesser Snow Goose, and an overview of management concerns related to overabundance. There have been significant increases in populations across the arctic, which has led to significant habitat loss from overgrazing. The North American population objective, established in 2012, is 200,000 birds; the nesting population has grown from 165,000 in 1976 to over 500,000 in recent years. Ernest noted that harvest in Tuk has likely decreased because the birds haven't flown close to the community, and so people have to travel farther from the community in order to harvest - all the way to Anderson River. Danny pointed out that numbers in Aklavik have decreased in the last 20 years because one area used to be full of geese, but in the last 20 years the geese have been going way back into the mountains in the Blow River and Herschel Island. He indicated 300,000 - 400,000 that are moving back into the mountains instead of staging on the flats. He remembers in 1944 Lesser Snow Geese going all the way to Barter Island, but doesn't think that has happened since. A lively discussion ensued, with Danny pointing out that yellow legs (known as white fronted goose) is a more popular species to harvest at the present time.

Ernest stated that his household could consume 70 snow geese in one year. He also noted that the birds changed their path in the 70s when there was a lot of industrial activity taking place around Tuktoyuktuk.

CWS undertook a study of habitat degradation on Banks Island. The study's authors recommend that the population be limited so that negative impacts to habitat and other species do not become a problem. This could be a timely initiative, given that CWS is also attempting to liberalize harvest for Ross's Goose in the eastern and central arctic. He further noted that the snow geese that nest at Wrangle Island, Russia, are now slightly above the population objective. He indicated that opening up the harvest on the birds would likely mean that more birds would be taken down south, but that they also expect more birds to be taken in the north, closer to the nesting colonies. Because these birds are

a transboundary, migratory species, CWS must consider stakeholders in all the jurisdictions the birds visit over the course of a year.

Management Options include:

- Liberalize fall non-aboriginal harvest in Canada. This would mean increasing the daily bag limit from 20 to 50 in AB, SK, and NWT, and removing the possession limit. Aboriginal harvest has no daily bag or possession limits.
- Designate the population overabundant and establish a spring non-aboriginal harvest for Snow Geese in AB and NWT.
- Liberalize fall and winter harvest in US. This is a US-led initiative, which could include increasing the daily bag limit from 10 to 20.

Blake reviewed Inuvialuit consultations to date, and provided a brief summary of concerns, questions, issues, and endorsements. Inuvik and Aklavik expressed concerns with enforcement, and Aklavik indicated their preference to having no bag limit for Snow Geese would be an increase of 3x the existing bag limit - that is 150 birds. The Game Council provided their support for liberalizing the harvest.

Blake requests a written response by October 31, 2013 as to whether the Council supports the change, doesn't support the change, or other concerns.

Ernest queried the introduction of monitoring arrangements for an increased harvest scenario, especially down south. He noted that consuming the head, necks, and gizzards is considered normal in Tuk, but others waste meat by not eating these parts of the bird. Blake indicated that this is not the first time he has heard this concern, but the enforcement issues are difficult ones.

Right now CWS is examining solely increasing the harvest in NWT, AB and SK (not YT). That being said, he is aware that some birds from NWT use the North Slope and even Alaska, but at this time CWS is not considering increasing the harvest on the North Slope.

\*\*\*Saleem Dar joined the meeting 10:02am\*\*\*

Rob thought it would be more consistent and comprehensive to include Yukon in the new regime, so that it was uniform across the whole western arctic.

Blake indicated that the TK report on waterfowl harvesting that he authored is nearly ready for publication. He will ensure that WMACNS receives a copy.

**Action 09-13-04: Write letter to CWS, regarding liberalization of Lesser Snow Goose harvesting. Collaborate with WMAC(NWT) on a joint letter if possible.**



Dan Teillet (Head, Bird Conservation, CWS, Gatineau) presented about the Proposed Changes to the Migratory Birds Regulations regarding Aboriginal Peoples and Rights.

Proposed changes to the Migratory Birds Regulations focus on updating references to Aboriginal people and their rights. These components of the regulations are old; they have not been changed over 30 years, with some sections having been the same for 50 years. The Migratory Birds Convention was signed in 1916, and has been amended once in 1995 (Parksville Protocol). The *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*, was changed to accommodate the Parksville Protocol; the Migratory Birds Regulations were not.

Summary of problems with current MBR:

- Definitions are poor for First Nations and Inuit and silent on Metis.
- There is no acknowledgement of domestic harvesting rights such as year round harvesting, collecting eggs and down, bag or possession limits.
- There are inconsistencies such as rifles can only be used in northern Quebec, NWT, and Nunavut, while only the JBNQA and Northeastern Quebec land claims are mentioned.

Recommended Regulatory Changes:

- To ensure that the Aboriginal people of Canada with treaty or aboriginal harvesting rights may domestically harvest migratory birds in the area where those rights are derived
  - o Without a migratory game permit
  - o Throughout the year
  - o With no bag or possession limit but subject to measures necessary for conservation, public health and public safety.
- That the Aboriginal peoples of Canada may barter, exchange, or trade, but not sell, migratory birds domestically harvested under aboriginal treaty rights
- That the Aboriginal peoples of Canada may sell inedible parts of harvested migratory birds.

Currently the MBR allow Aboriginal harvesters to use rifles or shotguns with a single bullet (meaning shotgun slug) to hunt migratory birds in NWT and northern Quebec. This is interpreted to include Nunavut as the regulation was in place prior to the creation of Nunavut. CWS is considering whether this should be expanded to other remote areas of the country such as Labrador, northern Ontario, northern Manitoba, and Yukon.

The Chair suggested that CWS review the sale, trade and barter guidelines developed by the PCMB, as an attempt to bring clarity to the intent of 'sale, trade and barter' while also providing guidance on the practical application of it.

**Action 09-13-05: Write a letter to CWS regarding proposed changes to Migratory Bird Regulations proposed (by Dec 31), and any suggestions for change. Joint letter with WMAC(NWT) if possible.**

## **Saleem Dar, CWS- SARA Proposed Listing for Grizzly Bear.**

Saleem discussed the SARA and the Listing process.

- 1) Assessment of species to determine if they are at risk by COSEWIC and recommend to the Environment Minister
- 2) Listing- the decision whether or not to list a species, once listed SARA applies. Consultation prior to listing.
- 3) If list then a recovery plan is developed, special concern species require a management plan
- 4) Implementation – conservation measure carried out in the management plan

Species are reassessed every ten years.

Since 1992 Grizzly Bear has been assessed as special concern. It has been assessed but has not been listed under SARA yet (which came into force in 2003). The Special Concern designation is largely due to the poor condition in the southern part of the range, naturally low reproductive rates, increased pressure from resource extraction and cumulative impacts. A Special Concern designation means that the species is sensitive to human activities or natural events, may become threatened if factors are not reversed or managed.

**Action Item 09-13-06: Council to respond to CWS regarding SARA Grizzly Bear listing by Oct 4th. Joint letter with WMAC(NWT) if possible.**

\*\*\*CWS left the meeting\*\*\*

### **Grizzly Bear**

Rob provided an overview of the status of the North Slope Grizzly Bear Study. He is in receipt of a final draft of the study report, but it is not in a form that would be useful for co-management purposes. Analysis continues to indicate that there are approximately 85 more bears than John Nagy's study, meaning that there are approximately 399 bears in total. The study findings indicate that the population seems healthy for adults, but it shows a decline overall. There are questions that remain and so Ramona has been looking into whether caribou are the factor, or if there is something else. Harvest is recorded and the environmental stressors are largely known

Ramona indicated that there is one large male bear on the landscape that is responsible for siring a large part of the population (about 20%) and he could be killing off competition.

The ISR Grizzly Bear Management Plan indicates a sustainable harvest rate of 3% . The harvest rate would result in a harvest quota of 12 bears from an estimated population of 400 bears on the YNS..

\*\*\*Break for Lunch\*\*\*

The Council began discussions about a way forward with the grizzly bear issue – originally we had discussed having a workshop in Aklavik with the HTC and WMAC(NWT) that would review the study and results and lead into a discussion about Aklavik GB Quotas.

Rob indicated that timing depends on how complete the final report needs to be for the purposes of the workshop. There are further research questions that the Council doesn't need to wait for before making management decisions. A final product is possible by the end of March, with a preliminary document (essence of the report) ready for an earlier workshop.

Danny stressed that earlier is better. People would appreciate the Council's presence in Aklavik to facilitate closure on the project and the quota review.

Lindsay noted that Richard Gordon should be invited to the workshop, given that the quota extends into Herschel Park.

\*\*\*Meeting adjourned for the day; group went to Joint WMACs meeting\*\*\*

September 26, 2013

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**Lindsay Staples** (Chair) · **Rob Florkiewicz** Yukon Government (Member) **Chris Hunter** Government of Canada (Member) · **Mike Suitor** Yukon Government (Alternate) · **Danny C. Gordon** Inuvialuit Game Council (Member) · **Ernest Pokiak** Inuvialuit Game Council · **Jennifer Smith** (Secretariat) · **Christine Cleghorn** (Secretariat) · **Stephanie Muckenheim** (Guest) Yukon Government, IFA Implementation and Projects Coordinator · **Carrie Docken**, YG Parks (Guest) · **Eric Schroff** Director, YG Parks Branch (Guest) · **Richard Gordon** Herschel Island Park Head Ranger · **Diane Wilson**, Parks Canada (Guest)

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The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:18am, and welcomed Richard Gordon, Eric Schroff and Carrie Docken. He briefly reviewed the agenda, and the group introduced themselves.

### **Herschel Island Park Management**

Lindsay reviewed the Council's responsibilities regarding Herschel Park. His remarks were intended to provide some history for Parks staff about the Council's role in Herschel Park operations and management.

The Chair noted that the North Slope is obviously a special place because it gets its own dedicated chapter in the IFA. It is an area of special significance, due in part to the time at

which the negotiations were unfolding (co-incident with an abundance of oil and gas exploration in the Beaufort and the “Berger Inquiry” recommendations for the area, including the YNS). The 1977 Agreement in Principle proposed the entire Yukon North Slope be designated as a national park. By the end of the negotiations 1984, in part because of the Yukon’s strong desire to have access to tidewater, the area to the east of the Babbage River was excluded from the park and considered as an area of special conservation with some accommodation for controlled development, if the conservation requirements were met. At the time the entire North Slope was withdrawn from mineral and hydrocarbon exploration. It continues to apply on the remaining area east of Ivvavik National Park. The conservation regime established for the YNS includes a number of components: the National Park, Herschel Island Park, the Eastern North Slope, the offshore and nearshore waters, and the creation of the WMAC(NS) to advise the Minister on all matters of conservation. The Council plays an important role with respect to integrating these components in the conservation regime for the area and achieving collaboration and coordination with the other parties who have responsibilities in that area (YG, DFO, Environment Canada, CWS, Parks Canada, etc).

One of the interesting aspects of the IFA implementation funding arrangement is the support provided for wildlife research. At the time the claim was signed in 1984, there was a significant amount of research needed to support the implementation of management obligations. Especially with respect to the termination of harvest quotas, the Council requires the best available information. The IFA implementation funding arrangements also included funding for a biologist (.5 FTE) to conduct research on the North Slope. Initially this funding was attached to the Council, but by letter of understanding, the funds were transferred to Yukon for these same purposes.

Although the IFA was signed in 1984, the Council was not established until 1988. In the early days, prior to the establishment of the Council, YG made some decisions about the expenditure of IFA research funds that the Inuvialuit took exception to. As per the relationship between the WMAC(NWT) and government parties receiving funds for wildlife research, the Yukon, Parks Canada and Environment Canada agreed to submit IFA-funding proposals to the Council for review and recommendation prior to their implementation. Since the Council was established, the Council has attempted to be clear about its research priorities, and that the research funds are spent in a manner that is coordinated, efficient, and effective. The Council is sensitive to the different responsibilities of various agencies, but at the same time encourages collaboration between funders on research that benefits everyone.

Bill Dolan, the first Ivvavik Park Superintendent, was a remarkable force in taking the vision of the Park and creating a partnership relationship with the WMAC (NS) that the Council has expanded upon over time. The Council involvement with Parks Canada is at a higher strategic level that focuses on planning and policy issues.

Regarding Herschel Park, the Council has had a longstanding close relationship with the management of Herschel. One of the Council’s early tasks was to provide guidance to

Yukon Parks about the creation of the Park. The Herschel Technical Working Group was created to address operational matters associated with the establishment of the park. The working group involved Inuvialuit representatives and YG staff. Over time, the role of the working group in reviewing the initial annual work plan evolved. The working group was subsequently disbanded and their role was assumed by the WMAC(NS). At a strategic level and a management level, the Council continues to have responsibilities with respect to Herschel Island Territorial Park.

The Council's involvement with the previous and existing management plans for Herschel has been, in part, a reflection of the capacity within YG Parks Branch. The Council played an important role in the development of the current management plan. The Herschel plan needs to be integrated with the conservation regime across the North Slope, and the Council is well positioned to facilitate that integration.

While much of the North Slope is managed actively under the (draft) Yukon North Slope Wildlife Conservation and Management Plan (2002) (WCMP), the eastern North Slope's wildlife conservation and management planning require the most immediate attention and updating. This area presents unique management challenges and the Council's resources are inadequate to address them.

The Council also participates in several environmental monitoring initiatives, including Arctic Borderlands Ecological Knowledge Coop Society and the Herschel Monitoring program. Both implement some of the monitoring provisions of the YNS WCMP.

The Council recognizes that the Yukon Parks Branch is involved in a territory-wide parks monitoring program. However the Herschel monitoring program's unique history and foundation does not lend itself to Yukon-wide templates or application.

Eric thanked Lindsay for his remarks, and noted that it would be helpful to have a workshop to begin to better understand (a) common ground amongst Herschel and YNS management partners; (b) the Herschel management plan and associated monitoring plan and interpretive plan; and (c) information regarding working relationships that could benefit future managers. Parks could assist in resourcing such a workshop. Eric noted that it is not problematic if the Herschel monitoring plan differs from monitoring and management elsewhere, provided that the goals and objectives are achievable.

Diane noted that there is considerable potential for closer collaboration between Ivvavik and Herschel Par, on monitoring and visitation.

Lindsay flagged several issues for further discussion. He noted the utility of future working sessions, particularly to look at the monitoring program in the context of the WMCP, the management plan, and the interpretation plan, as well as the synergies to be captured between the two parks. Early February would be an ideal timeframe for a working session of this nature.

**Action 09-13-07: Secretariat to coordinate with Carrie Docken to plan working session in early February. Invite Parks Canada and others.**

Lindsay flagged the Cruise Ship policy, offshore moorage in the Herschel Basin, and User Fees as issues to raise. It may be time for a research policy, to ensure that use of the park (Pauline Cove) by researchers does not interfere with the sustainability of the resource. Diane indicated that Parks Canada may have some resources to assist this conversation.

Richard pointed to the Letter of Agreement that is in place with Hughes Lantoi's group. In exchange for the use of the old Ranger Cabin, Hughes was able to upgrade some assets on site. This seems to be a great arrangement.

**2013 Season Report for Herschel Island- Richard Gordon**

Richard provided the summer seasonal report for Herschel Island.

Richard invited the Heritage branch during the cruise ship visit to assess impact. The biggest concern was for the whaler's graves. The first cruise ship was 120 people and after the two hours of visitation a small trail had become 2-4 feet wide and was filled 6 inches deep with water. As a result they decided to cut off walking to the whalers graves due to the impact. The last cruise ship was 230 people- it was more controllable because they knew where the impact would be. It was positive that for each visit there was low water, so a lot of the foot traffic could stay to the beach.

Richard has been trying to have a better understanding of staffing needs during cruise ship visits. The goal was to have the cruise ship policy ready for next season, but it won't be ready for the next season. Richard said that there may be a time where we have to limit cruise ship traffic to the island.

This year there were 750 visitors to the Park. Of these, 533 visited in one day from 3 cruise ships. There were 50 aircraft landings.

Chris suggested that there may be a collaboration between site planning at Sheep Creek and Herschel Island. Diane suggested that it would be helpful to look at the words in the IFA and then to look at objectives rather than start with the operational stuff. Objectives and vision can help to guide toward target number of visitors.

Stephanie said that Yukon tourism will be involved in the working group. Lindsay said that it would be interesting to forecast into the future for cruise ship traffic scenarios. Tourism could be able to look at this.

The numbers of muskox and caribou are declining because of icing events on the island during the winter. Muskoxen are starting to move to the mainland. Danny asked about ptarmigans. Richard said that he doesn't see many of them on the island.

He said there were 4 bear occurrences and warning shots were fired. The rangers are responsible, but they look to the HTC for direction when dealing with bear conflicts.

Richard raised the use of rubber bullets. Bear management and deterrents should be discussed.

Chris Hunter provided an update on the Ecological Integrity monitoring program for Parks Canada for Ivavik. (see meeting package).

Chris provided an update of the 2013 field season. The breeding bird surveys were conducted in the spring and the rest of the monitoring cameras were deployed according to the study design where a lot of effort was focused. The Park is no longer doing Firth river patrols and as a result, some of the cameras have been changed to other locations. There were 19 cameras set up and working through the summer. There was a monitoring effort in August to look at human use. They are leaving 11 cameras set up throughout the winter this year.

Parks produced a video with images collected in the park of Porcupine Caribou. This video has been uploaded to the internet and has over 60,000 views. It is a good educational opportunity as well.

The coastal monitoring this year was successful. A small transect was done on the coast. They are continuing to collect ground information and shrub height and cover and more detailed and subtle vegetation change. They are satisfied with the data so far and are optimistic about confirming a good monitoring protocol. For monitoring coastal erosion they are still hoping to develop the protocol in partnership with the geological survey of Canada (GSC). Lindsay suggested Chris keep the Council abreast of the GSC initiatives.

Aklavik Coastal monitoring workshop: Parks sent the maps to the HTC to put up in the office in August so they have until the first week of October to collect comments and then they will summarize the results from the workshop.

Airstrip assessment: with some technical assistance, an airstrip assessment was done to get familiar with the site to work on the visitor safety plan. He will be working on the plan over the winter with the field unit.

Wildlife monitors/bear guards: There were seven to eight firearms permits to beneficiary bear guards mostly for the Yukon geological survey project. There are still implementing the interim guidelines fairly successfully.

Glen Davis request: Lindsay explained the request of WWF to rename the rapids upriver from Sheep Creek after well known philanthropist Glen Davis. Chris suggested that the request be forwarded to the Aklavik HTC and Community Corp for their consideration. Any naming process would presumably include consideration of Inuvialuit traditional names. The Council decided that the request would be sent to the AHTC and to the Aklavik Community Corp.

Richard Gordon made an alternative suggestion that a site at Nunaluk could be a good place to name after Glen as a plaque could be put up and it is the end of many people's trip and it would be a good place where people could read about it. The members suggested something be constructed like a bench – that could enhance the visitor experience.

\*\*\* Round River joined the meeting\*\*\*  
(Kim Heinemeyer, Dennis Sizemore, Julian Griggs)

Lindsay provided an overview of the council. He explained the conservation regime across the North Slope including Herschel, Ivvavik and the eastern portion of the North Slope.

Denis thanked the council for the invitation to the meeting. He explained Round River's mission statement and the kind of work they do. Dennis said that with all of their partnerships, they want to learn. Conservation biology was largely developed in response to fragmented landscape, so conservation biology science was developed around recovering and integrating landscapes. In the case of the North Slope, the science and the engagement needs to be different since it is a largely intact area.

Kim provided an overview of Round River's expertise, using examples from previous work. They can support both planning and management, identify areas of higher and lower sensitivity, scenario modeling and trade-off analysis.

\*\*\* Kim Heinemeyer, Dennis Sizemore, Julian Griggs left the meeting\*\*\*

The Council had a brief discussion about the Round River presentation, and the importance of ensuring that any working relationship the Council develops with Round River be used to enhance existing partnerships with government agencies and other organizations (eg. AHTC).

The Council continued their discussion about the possibility of working with Round River Conservation Studies in future conservation planning. People agreed that a phased approach to the process would be the most prudent, with clear decision points.

## **Financial Review**



Jen reviewed financial statements. The Council encouraged her to prioritize research on health benefits for staff and to include them in the budget this year.

### **Upcoming Meetings**

AHTC AGM October 16<sup>th</sup>

WMAC(NS) Teleconference – discussion of possible dates in October , Chris on holidays 5-20<sup>th</sup>.

Porcupine caribou census- results in February 2013

February 2013 – Porcupine Caribou harvest results workshop

*Motion 09-13-03*

*To adjourn the meeting.*

*Moved: Rob Florkiewicz*

*Second: Danny C. Gordon*

*Motion carried.*

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:00pm and thanked all for coming.